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NUGAMENTA;

A BOOK OF VERSES

BY

GEORGE EDWARD RICE.

“Nos trifida vitæ
Solamur cantu.” STATIUS.

“I left no calling for this idle trade,
No duty broke.” POPE.

BOSTON :
J. E. TILTON AND COMPANY.
1860.

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TO THE MEMORY OF ONE WHOSE GENTLE EYES WILL
NEVER REST UPON THESE PRINTED PAGES, THEY ARE IN-
SCRIBED, THOUGH ALL UNWORTHY OF THE HONOR, WITH
SENTIMENTS OF AFFECTION AND REGRET THAT LANGUAGE
CANNOT INDICATE NOR TIME DESTROY.



Aug. 10 - 1861 -

SUICIDE. We regret to learn that Mr. George Edward Rice shot himself yesterday in the boarding house of Mr. David Reed, Roxbury. Mr. Rice was well known in the community as a graceful poet, and both his serious and humorous productions have elicited much praise from competent judges. We have not learned the cause of the act, but suppose it must have been depression of spirits amounting to aberration of mind.

NUGAMENTA. A BOOK OF VERSES. By GEO.
EDWARD RICE. Boston: TILTON & Co.

Between the highland of poetry and the prairies of prose lies a middle ground of verse, fit to be the chosen home of refined thought and graceful feeling, but not often very successfully occupied. There HORACE built his villa; and there the most charming of the writers to whom France concedes the honors of the muse abide. Our own English literature is less rich in such men, partly, perhaps, because the genius of the language lends itself less easily to their fine evanescent fancies, partly because the ways and passions of the race are too positive to give them much chance for existence. Yet WALLER belongs to their order, and no *salon* of Paris ever listened to a lighter thrumming of the spiritual guitar than passed from the facile fingers of PRAED.

In America few have essayed this mid-region of music and feeling with so much success as Dr. HOLMES; and now Boston sends us, in the person of Mr. GEORGE E. RICE, another New-England candidate for honors which the heirs of the cavaliers might have been supposed more likely to grasp than the sons of the Puritans. Mr. Rice's *Nugamenta* is a book which none but a gentleman could have written, full of delicate perceptions, fleeting gleams, and glooms as fleeting, quaint conceits and honorable sentiments. They have been clothed in metre with no unskillful hand, and the writer is over-modest when he offers them to the *uncritical* reader alone as the possible solace of worn or weary hours.



PREFACE.

THIS Book contains a few pieces of occasional Verse, which, without pretension to Poetry, the writer trusts may beguile some weary moments for the uncritical reader.

April, 1860.
16 COURT STREET, BOSTON.





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VERSES.



THE PROPHECY.

PART I.

IF you would hear me speak of one who dwelt
In that fair land of Poland, years ago,
And of his fate, so mournful, — and would hear
Also of one whose love and grief for him
Raised her from Earth to Heaven — Listen !

There are such things, however worldlings sneer,
As love for all mankind, and sympathy
With every suffering of humanity, —
As loftiness of purpose in a life, —
As moral grandeur in a death, that crowns
A peerless life with an immortal fame, —
As Woman's love, through sorrow and distress, —
As trust unfaltering, and as broken hearts.

The moon was flooding with her gentle light
The green and dewy meadow, and she made

The night so calm and lovely, lovelier still ;
The stars, o'erpowered by her brighter beams,
Scarce ventured forth, save here and there a few
That faintly glimmered in the Orient.
Nature seemed tranquil, — not a breeze swept by
To bid the lily rear its coronal,
Or waft its perfume from the violet ;
And save the murmuring of the rivulet,
That, creeping sluggishly along, illumed
By calm Diana's rays, seemed molten silver,
The silence was unbroken ; till a sound,
That seemed the measured tread of warlike men,
Came from a wooded and far-distant hill ;
Nearer it came, and nearer ; now the moon
Gleamed on the bayonets, and touched their points
With her pure argent light, and now they came
With slow and steady step across the plain
Straight to the river's margin. All were armed
Save one, who trod the proudest and most firm,
Though he alone of all had nothing more
To hope on earth, — for he had come to die.
His crime was this : He dared to stand alone
The champion of the Suffering and the Poor ;
He thought that human laws might yet be framed
More equal for the Lowly and the Great ;
And that God made this fair and beauteous Earth
So beautiful, for all men to enjoy
And walk erect thereon in majesty.

They called it Treason, when he spake these thoughts,
And led him forth upon the plain to die, —
To die at night, — this calm and lovely night, —
Because beneath God's glorious eye, — the Sun, —
They dared not kill the man the people loved.

Erect and unappalled he stood ; his eye,
Bright with the light of genius and of truth,
Undimmed, could face Death's cruel messengers.
Godlike he seemed in beauty and in mien ;
Young, valiant, noble, and yet doomed to die, —
His purpose unaccomplished, and his great
And lofty destiny yet unfulfilled.
He looked upon the sky, the moon, the stars,
The river and the meadow he must leave
In one brief moment ; and he thought of Him
Who made them all so grand and beautiful,
And breathed a prayer that he might find at last
Rest in His kingdom ; then he thought of her —
The flower he had worn upon his heart
In all its bloom, its fragrance, and its beauty —
Whose calm sweet smile was ever at his hearth,
Whose life was love and gentleness and peace,
And with her name upon his lips he gave
The fatal signal. Oh, most worthy he,
Living, to live in some true woman's eyes,
And, dying, to be buried in her heart !

A quick, sharp volley, then a heavy fall,
And all was over.

Oh, 'twas bravely done !
Io Triumphe ! 'twas a worthy deed !
Now found the bugle, beat the rattling drum,
And back to whence ye came. Go ! leave the corse,
That held the soul that God is keeping now,
A prey to wolves less merciless than ye.

PART II.

Alas, how ill news speeds ! And yet she knew,
Ere they had told her, that her Love lay dead !
Between two great and loving hearts the bond
Of sympathy is such, though seas divide,
One cannot bleed alone. She shed no tear
And made no moan, but she arose and wrapped
Her mantle 'round her slender form and fled
Straight to the bloodstained sod, — for Love inspired,
And they whom Love inspires can ne'er be wrong.
The moon, that hid her face behind a cloud
And would not see him die, shone forth to light her.
Onward she came with swift unsteady gait,
Springing, then faltering, like a wounded deer ; —
Right on she sped to his pale corse, direct
As steel flies to the magnet. When she saw
The outline of his figure, where he lay

As graceful and as beautiful in death
As e'er in life, there rose one piercing shriek,
Wild and unearthly, that might rend the sky ;
Yet on she came. O God ! what human power
Could keep these hearts apart ! Ah ! never yet
Had Love a truer votary than she.
She reached the spot and knelt, — she could not
weep, —

Her eyes seemed balls of fire, and her heart,
Throbbing convulsively with painful fobs
All unrelieved by tears, was breaking now.
She wound her arms around his form, and spake
To him who ne'er before refused to listen : —
“ Kind friend, fond lover, gentle husband, speak !
It is your Wenda calls. How oft you've said,
When sitting side by side some summer's eve,
Your arm around me, that if you were dead
My kifs would rouse you. There, my sweet Love,
there !

I press my lips so cold to yours still colder ;
My arms are 'round you ; are you dead, quite dead ?
Is the heart stilled whereon my head hath lain
So calm and sweetly tranquil, all unmoved
Save by its throbs that syllabled my name ?
My Love, my Life, my Lord, will you not speak ?
My bosom ever thrilled at your dear voice
Like harpstring to the minstrel's touch. Oh, speak !
My inmost thoughts were yours, and every wish

Of my fond heart, and all my Fancy's dreams ;
You were my first, my last, and only Love,
And all my spirit was by yours controlled.
And are you dead, my own sweet Love, quite dead ?
So good, so noble, generous, and brave !
You will not speak. I seem of sense bereft —
My brain is reeling. Hark ! I hear a voice
Not yours, my Love. It is the cry of Blood !
For blood unjustly shed, blood still must answer.”

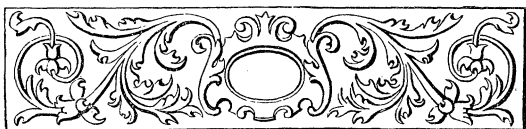
Then rose she from his side, and standing forth
Towered a Pythoness in majesty.
She turned her face towards Warfaw, and she raised
Trembling aloft one small and sculptured hand
As white as alabaster, save a spot
Made crimson by a gallant heart's best blood,
And thus she spake : —

“ Woe to the Capital !
To the Kingdom, woe ! I feel the spirit
Of prophecy is on me. Woe to Poland !
A century shall pass, then there shall be
The Russian in your homes. I hear the shriek
Of dying victims, and I see the light
Of blazing roofs. Woe to fair Poland, woe !
This noble blood shall be avenged in time.”
Then fell she on the corse, and there she lay,
Her breaking heart against his broken one,
Murmuring so gently, — “ Let me die with him

I loved so much ! O Father, let me die !”
And God was merciful and heard her prayer.

A century has passed, and that fair land
Is known no more 'mid nations of the world.
The Russian at their hearths and in their halls
Now reigns supreme, yet Nature is the same ;
The meadow still is fair, the moon beams bright,
The rivulet creeps by, and nought seems changed,
Unless, perchance, one bank of violets
Is of a brighter and a lovelier hue
And yields a sweeter perfume, for it grows
Above two noble hearts, and there for aye
The moon shall beam, the rivulet creep by.





FANTASIA.

WHEN I, in melancholy mood,
By real or by fancied griefs oppress'd,
Sigh but for peace and long to be at rest,
I find it good
Alone to wander
Far from the crowded mart and walks of trade,
Where foot of man hath seldom trod,
And there in solitude and silence ponder
On all the works of a most bounteous God.
I seek sometimes the Forest shade ;
To the sad music of the Pines I listen,
And watch the wild wood flowers,
With hues made brighter by the grateful showers,
Wave in the wind and in the sunlight glisten ;
Or by the margin of the boundless sea,
The shore my couch, the Heaven my canopy,
Reclining on the sand I lie
To hearken to the ripple's mournful tune,
Or by the silvery radiance of the moon
To mark the gorgeous pomp and splendors of the
sky.

While straying thus one day
From all the haunts of men
Far, very far away,
To greet the breezes from across the sea,
I came upon a small and lovely glen
Where grew the Jasmine and the Violet,
The spicy Pink, the fragrant Mignonette,
And sweet Anemone ;
And in that lonely spot,
With Woodbine covered o'er,
Stood a sequestered cot.

Wearied and faint, and tired of meditation,
I hailed with joy this human habitation,
And at the cottage door
I saw a man with flowing silvery hair
Who beckoned me to come, and placed a chair
And asked me to partake his simple fare.

Refreshed with food and wine,
I thanked this host of mine ;
And when I rose, my footsteps to retrace,
Sadly the old man sighed,
And the big tears came streaming down his face.
“ You’ve been by sorrow tried, —
Tell me your tale,” I cried,
“ Why by this desolate shore,
Hearing the wind’s sad moan

And the deep ocean's roar,
You dwell remote, untended, and alone."

Sadly he gazed on the glorious sea,
And this was the tale as he told it to me : —

"Long, long ago in years gone by,
Ere sorrow struck me with a fatal dart,
And Life was bright and hopes were high,
I wooed and won the Idol of my heart.

"In this little cot lived we,
That gentle girl and I,
As happy as we could be.
Week after week flew by,
Flew by my Love and me,
And month came in and month passed out,
But we heeded not what the months were about
So pleasantly lived we
By the side of the founding sea.

"Happy beyond humanity's lot
Were we in this desolate spot,
For swiftly and joyously passed the time
While we read volumes of quaint old rhyme
Sung by the Poets whose wonderful art
Quickens the throbs of a Nation's heart,
And those enchanting tales of Fairy land

That erst had charmed us in our childhood's hours ;
And then, with hand in hand,
Or with my arm around her slender waist,
Happy to be thus placed,
We wandered o'er the fields and plucked the flowers.

“Those days have flown,—I can but say ‘Woe’s
me !’

And think how blithe were we ;
Unmindful that calamity might come ;
That we might live and love no more
In our small cot, beside this rocky shore,
That made so dear a home.
We could not fancy as the years flew by, —
Flew by on angel's pinions, —
That any clouds could darken our bright sky ;
That aught could dim the lustre of an eye
Or cause one tearful sigh
In Love's dominions.

“How oft at eve, along the rocks, we strolled
To hear the ocean's roar
And watch the waves, as one by one they rolled
Up the resounding shore !
And as we recognized the mighty hand
Of Him who made the sea, the sky, the land,
We felt our souls expand,
And loved each other more
Than e'er we loved before.

“ So love went on increasing day by day,
And three years passed away ;
No happier hours were ever known than we
Enjoyed in this small cot beside the deep blue sea.

“ One fearful night,
When the storm was abroad in all its might,
Reading I sat alone
Hearing the moan
Of the fierce tempest, and the ocean's roar,
And by our cottage door
Swept the great angry waves with many a groan
And many a dismal wail ;
Frequent the lightning's flash,
Frequent the sudden crash,
That told of some great tree laid prostrate by the gale.

“ She in the sunshine of whose smile I lived,
In winning whom Life's purpose seemed to end ;
Who never, while I loved her, could have grieved, —
My better angel and unchanging friend, —
Had seen the heavy clouds around us lower
And sought her chamber at the twilight hour ;
But when the storm rose high
And raged with violence so superhuman
I wished to join her, — for, when danger's nigh,
'Tis thought a gentle woman
Feels less inquietude and fear,
If by her side is one to whom she's dear, —

So I the half-read book
Returned to its accustomed nook
And fought the chamber where I thought there lay
All that my God had given, — all he could take away.

“Softly I opened the unfastened door ;
She who remembered every sacred duty,
In all her innocence and beauty,
Was kneeling on the floor.
I knew her prayer ascended,
Meekly, sincerely,
For him she loved so dearly,
And, ere that prayer was ended,
For me to enter there
Would have profaned the air
Made holy by her prayer.
I could but worship her, —
A saintlike woman who could never err, —
So stainless and so fair.

“When her fond prayer was said
She raised her queenlike head
And turned on me her gentle eyes
With a faint smile of sweet surprise.
Forth from the threshold of the door
I sprang to raise her from the floor,
But ere my extended arms
Could clasp her graceful charms

A sudden, dazzling glare
Lightened the murky air,
And on the floor she lay ;
Without a sigh or groan
Her soul had passed away
And I was left — alone !

“ Stilled is the heart that solely beat for me
Three happy years beside the deep blue sea ;
The gentle eyes are closed
That shone so brightly when I sang their praises,
And o’er the bosom where my head reposed
Grow now the violets and daisies.
There, in her favorite dell,
Where she oft wandered when the Morn was break-
ing,
She sleeps the sleep that knows no waking,
Surrounded by the flowers she loved in life so well.

“ Long years have fled since then,
And Time has bowed my head and blanched my hair,
While I, remote from men,
Have passed my days in study and in prayer.
Here in this spot made holy by her death
Will I yield up my breath,
And while I live my life shall be
Kept sacred to her memory.

'Tis good to bear the Crofs,
And if my grievous lofs
To me is fanctified,
And I, by fore affliction tried,
From all my earthly taints
And fins am purified,
In manfions of the Juft,
Beyond the fky, I trust
To meet her with the Saints."

The fun had tinged the western wave with glory,
The twilight had crept on me, and the pall
Of Night had flowly fettled over all,
The while I liftened to this tearful ftory ;
Then through the air I heard a diftant bell
That pierced my foul like a funereal knell,
And I aroufed me and my footfteps bent
Homeward in ferious and thoughtful mood,
With all my feelings chaftened and fubdued,
On the philofophy of dreams intent.



WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

“For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these, — ‘It might have been.’”

WHITTIER.

I.

WHAT lies in the shadowy Future, alas !
Never falls within a blind Mortal's ken ;
We cannot foresee what will come to pass,
But we know too surely what might have been ;
Fulfilment of hopes that our sanguine youth
Thought simply awaited that we should be men
And could buckle our armor on for the Truth
Are among all the things that might have been.

II.

Like mist in the morn fled the roseate hue
Everything wore in that cloudless day
When hearts beat gayly, for Life was new
And flowers seemed scattered all over our way ;
We thought the time of our triumph so proud
Would come and denote us victorious men,
Now nameless we struggle amid the crowd
And bitterly think of what might have been.

III.

Sorrow is fruitless, — Regret is vain, —
Experience teaches but little to man ;
We should neglect our chances again,
Though we now know something of Nature's
plan ;
We talk of the blind undiscerning Age
That hailed us not as the coming men, —
History opened a virgin page
To receive our names, — did we seize the pen ?

IV.

Ah, no ! we basked and dreamed in the fun
While opportunities rare went by,
We awoke to find that nothing was done,
Then sat us down in the dust to sigh ;
We grieve, when we are alone to blame,
We, the vainglorious, cowardly men, —
Not having conquered a wreath from Fame,
It is idle to prate of what might have been.

V.

But yet to us all 'tis the solace left,
When disappointment has marked our way,
Being of hope for the Future bereft,
To speak of the hope of a former day ;

Not having been to our Mission true, —
And heaven ordains to the least of men
Manifold duties that he should do, —
We love to talk of what might have been.

VI.

I might have roamed over this world so wide,
In happiness such as ne'er mortal knew,
I as your guard, and you as my guide,
In search for the Beautiful, Pure, and True ;
I might have won an undying fame,
That would live in the hearts of my fellow-men,
And have made you proud that you bore my name :
All these are things that might have been.

VII.

My youth was tinged with a golden hue,
By the fond illusion that you were mine,
That I should prove my passion was true,
By a life's devotion through storm and shine.
We might have been happy — but let that pass,
For naught betides that we hoped for then, —
You are sleeping under the waving grass,
And I live but to think of what might have been.



ATARAXIA.

WHEN I am all aweary of the strife,
The turmoil and the restlessness of life,
And can no longer bear my unquiet heart
By cares and fears distressed,
But need the solace and the balm of rest,
I leave the town with all its busy hum
And seek the country and its solitude ;
Here to these fields I come,
And need no Teacher with his formal art
To prove that man is nought and God is good, —
No voice can speak like Nature's to my heart ; —
In every leaf and bud and flower I see
How great His power, and feel how weak are we ;
And as beside this violet bank I lie
Marking the stream glide by
With steady ceaseless flow,
Myself I scarcely know ;
I am no longer he who came
In fierce despairing mood
With all his brain aflame,
But I am tranquil, quiet, and subdued ;

For as the stream flows onward to the sea,
With gentle murmur soothing my sad soul,
It bears my gloomy thoughts far, far from me,
And off my heart the heavy shadows roll.

And while beside this river's brink
I lie outstretched, I think
How true it is we suffer not alone, —
Of griefs we know our own,
But be he friend or brother
We know not all the sorrows of another ;
And some who act a cheerful part
Have some great hidden grief
From which there's no escape — to which there's
no relief,
That like a vulture rends the bleeding heart,
Who yet will not complain,
And ne'er betray,
Cost what the struggle may,
By any outward sign, the inward pain.

It is the inevitable law
That man is born to trouble and to sorrow,
And uncomplaining he should bear the cross,
For if each to-morrow
Brings not the solace that we hope to-day,
Nor makes atonement for some bitter loss,
It sets us farther on our onward way,

And leaves us nearer to that pleasant shore
Where care and grief can trouble us no more.

Then whatfoe'er the Fates decree,
It still shall be
The constant burden of my prayer and song
That I may have the power
In stern Misfortune's hour,
To suffer and yet evermore be strong.





TO GLYCERA.

I.

AFTER so long a thraldom, to be free,
Is happiness supreme. I once supposed,
My pulse could never throb, except for thee ;
Thou wert my heart's true Queen, but now, de-
posed
By thy rebellious subject, who at last
Brooks not the Tyrant. Go, thy reign is past !

II.

Though all is over, and 'twere worse than idle
The ashes of this buried love to raise, —
Yet thoughts come thronging, and I cannot bridle
The tongue that sang so often in thy praise ;
The World was all forgotten for thy sake ;
And I must speak, or my full heart will break.

III.

The recollection of the days now fled,
When all my thoughts were trusted to thy care, —

When I still followed where thy footsteps led,
And deemed it happiness thy griefs to share, —
Shall, in the silent night, come back to thee,
And fill thy saddened heart with dreams of me.

IV.

And I, alas ! must think and sigh the while,
How, overcoming all my manhood's pride,
I hailed the sunshine of thy glorious smile,
And knew no pain, but absence from thy side ;
Apart from thee, this loving heart of mine
Throbb'd the dull moments till my lips met thine, —

V.

And then my blood, with lava-flowing tide,
Coursing tumultuous through each swelling vein,
Swept like a torrent down the mountain side,
Straight to my burning soul and maddening brain ;
And in those hours of terrible unrest,
I told the love that raged within my breast.

VI.

Thy lips responded, and my joyous heart
Leaped like a courser, as he nears the goal ;
My reason fled, o'ercome by Beauty's Art,
And I was thine at hazard of my soul.
Nay, speak not ! I have known by far too well,
Thy voice's music, and its magic spell.

VII.

But now, when Reason reafferts her sway,
I feel that Life hath nobler ends than Love,
The fond ambitious dreams of Boyhood's day
Return, as to the Ark the wandering dove ;
Hard is the struggle, but I rend thy chain,
And stand erect. I am a man again !

VIII.

Enfranchised now, no more my steps shall stray
To thine abode. We part at length forever !
I ne'er will let thy Siren voice essay
To lure me back again. I swear, that never
Will I behold thee, lest thy charms should move
My lips to flatter, and my soul to love.

IX.

No more in trembling accents will I sue,
Or gather blossoms to bedeck thy head ;
The Passion that I nursed until it grew
Stronger than Reason, now is cold and dead,
And cold and dead to thee shall be the heart
Once so controlled by thy transcendent Art.

X.

I grieve for mine own weakness ; I repine
At moments lost in gazing on thy face ;

I have regained my heart, that long was thine,
By one strong manly effort, and no trace
Of all my fond affection shall be seen ;
I will not be the slave that I have been.

XI.

We part ! Farewell ! I never can forget
What it were better could Oblivion shroud ;
But will not pause to tell one sad regret ;
I'll breathe a sigh, then onward with the crowd.
Is that a tear ? My struggles are in vain ;
See, Love, I'm kneeling at thy feet again !





TWILIGHT AND MOONLIGHT.

TWILIGHT.

I.

THE twilight with its mistiness and gloom
Over the peopled city slowly falls,
While I am sitting in my lonely room
Watching the shadows deepening on the walls.
Let me not think of visions that have past, —
Of hopes of Fame, — of stern demands of duty, —
Of Boyhood's dreams too fanciful to last, —
I'll take the hour to sing of Love and Beauty.

II.

But ere the Lyre yields to my carefing,
Sweet strains of music float upon the air,
A gentle hand is on my shoulder pressing,
I turn and see an angel by my chair.
"From yon blue Heaven," she says, "I guard and
cherish
All those who strive to win the poet's crown,
Be not enslaved by Beauty or you perish
And fall from Godlike heights ignobly down."

III.

I dare to answer, and with accents trembling
Exclaim, "Let Fame depart, I'll not repine;
When Beauty smiles, my heart knows no diffem-
bling,
And what were Glory to a Love like mine!"
"Alas," she says, "Has Reason then no chance?
Lift to her clarion voice for one brief minute;"
"Hold! hold!" I cry, "I'll break her shining lance,
For what is Love if there is Reason in it?"

IV.

Again she speaks, but now with exultation,
"Your heart, I find, is in the right condition;
'Tis Love that gives the Poet inspiration,
And power to fulfil his lofty mission;
Love on, — 'twill keep the heart forever young,
Hymn Beauty's praises wherefoe'er you're roving,
The noblest songs by Poet ever sung
Were sung by him who knew the pains of lov-
ing."

MOONLIGHT.

V.

And now Diana, from her throne on high, —
That virgin huntress with the silver bow, —

Becomes each moment brighter in the sky,
And sheds her gentle light on all below ;
And through each pane within my casement stream-
ing,
My room she lightens with her beams divine,
It is the hour when a Poet's dreaming
Is woven into verse, and this is mine.





MYRRHA.

“ She came in all her Beauty, like the moon from the cloud
of the East. Loveliness was around her as light. Her steps
were like the music of songs.” OSSIAN.

I.

My Fancy now has tasked her utmost skill,
And called before me an entrancing vision
To soothe my heart, to charm away each ill,
And lap me in a happiness Elysian ;

II.

For I discern across the moonbeams flitting
A sylphlike form of excellence most rare,
And now around the couch whereon I'm sitting
She floats in all her beauty through the air.

III.

I know within that form reigns Myrrha's heart,
To none but her such fabled charms are given ;
Nature, for once, has far exceeded Art,
And sent her as a perfect work from Heaven.

IV.

I seize the Lyre, — in vain I strive to sing
The love my tongue to her would fain express,
Her name alone breathes forth from every string, —
My Art is conquered by her loveliness.

V.

The strength, that I had vainly deemed my stay,
Melts like the snow before her Beauty's light, —
Her charms divine usurp my mind by day,
And break repose with restless dreams by night.

VI.

In store for me are many dreary hours,
But, Myrrha, there are none for one so fair ;
Thy path shall be enamelled o'er with flowers, —
The Beautiful are God's especial care.





AT THE FIRESIDE.

COME, dearest, ere they light the evening lamps,
And sit with me and gaze upon the fire.
I like to watch the dying embers fade ;
Thus let my arm encircle thee ; — now rest
Against my shoulder thy dear queenlike head,
And I will tell thee how my wayward Life
Was unfulfill'd until I won thy love ;
For my sad soul was like the wandering dove
Sent from the Ark, that found no resting place ;
Or like some rudderless and shattered Bark
Forfaken on a wild tempestuous sea,
Drifting its aimless course from point to point,
Fixed to no purpose. There were few to smile
And bid God speed me on my onward course.
Life had for me nor object, end, nor aim ;
All noble aspirations, high resolves
And fond ambitious dreams had fled. I seized
The flowery wreath that smiling Pleasure held,
And listened to her Siren voice, nor strove
To loose the arms she flung around my neck ;
But all was Vanity, — and I grew weary

Of this sad world of trouble, pain, and guilt.
Dark was my soul, but when the light of thine
Shone on me, I arose like some way-worn,
Benighted traveller, who perceives that Day
Is breaking in the East, and struggles on
To greet the uprising Sun. Before thy beams,
The clouds dispersed, and life again seemed bright.
Taught by thy grand example then I learned
How dear and pleasant are the ways of Truth.
I strove to walk within her peaceful paths,
And Thou wert my exceeding great reward.





THE CROWNING MERCY.

I.

FILL up the cup, my Beauty, fill up,
We've a long way to travel before we can sup ;
Your blue eyes are bright, and would they might light
The dangerous path we must travel to-night ;
Charlie has fled, there's a price on his head,
And many a gallant at Worcester lies dead.

II.

If the cropheads advance, we shall forfeit the chance
To escape from these shores to luxurious France ;
Yet here we'll remain for a moment to drain
A flagon and sing a wild cavalier strain ;
Ere to saddle we spring these rafters shall ring
With death to Old Noll and long life to the King.

III.

Many times by the side of Rupert, our pride,
Have I had the honor in battle to ride ;
In Marston Moor's fray, throughout all the day,
I ne'er from the sound of his voice was away ;

At Nafeby's fight, I rode close to his right,
And helped him escape by the shade of the night.

IV.

But never, I ween, has such carnage been seen
In these wars as at Worcester to-day there has been ;
Through the gates, which they crashed, the Puritans
dashed,
And bright in the sunlight their morions flashed ;
Thus taken by storm, our troops couldn't form,
And the hand-to-hand conflict was bloody and warm.

V.

No music I hear is so sweet to my ear
As the din of the contest when weapons ring clear ;
Our good swords were tough, our greeting was rough,
And with crimson we dyed many jerkins of buff ;
Fierce battle we gave all the day, and the wave
Of Severn flowed red with the blood of the brave.

VI.

It was war to the knife, and through the hot strife
Each Cavalier knew that he fought for his life ;
How sweet were the moans and the shrieks and the
groans
Of the knaves that our chargers' hoofs trod to the
stones ;
By Jove ! 'twas a fight, as to left and to right
We cut and we flashed through that terrible fight.

VII.

By Charlie we stood while it did any good ;
But, when he had fled, we escaped as we could ;
'The Country is lost, — this we know to our cost, —
And the boisterous channel to-night must be crost ;
For success to our trip, pray give me a sip
Of the glistening dew on that red pouting lip.

VIII.

With such a sweet kiss, as that one and this,
My fortune to-day has not been so amiss ;
Feel no alarm for that wound on my arm,
The sash you tied over it acts like a charm ;
But fill up the cup, my Beauty, fill up,
'Then, Comrades, to horse, 'tis in France we must
sup.





LOVE, HONOR, AND GLORY.

I.

LIKE a dying old Giant the wind howled and moaned,
And shook with great fury the fashies,
In sadness of heart by the fire I groaned,
And traced out her face in the ashes ;
The days of bright hopes like a dream had passed by,
And Life seemed a very dull story,
But I thought of the time when my pulses beat high
And I fighed for Love, Honor, and Glory.

II.

The fire at last went entirely out,
And the candles, but I never missed them ;
For Sleep on her pinions came flying about,
And stooped down to my eyelids and kissed
them ;
Forgot for the time was each fear and each doubt, —
Forgot each disheartening story, —
Forgot every grief, — and my heart became stout,
For I dreamed of Love, Honor, and Glory.



TO THE NIGHT WINDS.

GENTLE winds, ye have come over mountain and
dale,
Ye have swept o'er the ocean and kissed the white
fail ;
Ye have entered the chamber and gazed on the
slumbers
Of her who is ever the theme of my numbers ;
Ye have lingered awhile where my Charmer re-
poses,
To breathe on her cheek, — that abode of the
roses ;
Ye have pressed for a moment that delicate lip,
Where the bees of Hymettus their honey might
sip ;
Ye have hovered enraptured around her sweet
bosom,
More fragrant than dew on the Hyacinth's blossom ;
And as with remembrance of her ye come freighted,
My heart that was sad becomes strangely elated ;
Ye can mark her repose in this desolate hour,
For ye enter unheeded, where none have the power ;
Then seek her again, in her home by the sea,

And bear to her bedside this message from me.
Go ! tell her my heart, that has loved her in gladness,
Would be fonder and truer in sorrow and sadness ;
And through the wide world she may roam nor discover

So truthful a friend and so faithful a lover.
Alas, this is idle ! Fate's cruel decree
Forbids that her love should emparadise me ;
But who can restore me my heart as she found it,
Or my soul disenthral from the spell cast around it ?
And when the time comes that forbids all dissembling, —

When darkness surrounds, and Life's taper is trembling,
I will breathe her dear name as my sorrows are ending,

And then my sad soul to its Heaven ascending
Shall bear a fond prayer to the Powers supernal,
That her life, like my love, may be pure and eternal.

And when o'er my ashes the lilies are blooming,
The air that floats over me sweetly perfuming,
Ye will pause by the spot where in peace I am lying,
Unheeding the world and its smiling or fighting,
And will mark that whenever the feeling sweeps o'er her,

That I died, as I always had lived, her adorer,
She comes and bedews, as a sorrowful duty,
The flowers that cannot surpass her in beauty.



STANZAS.

I.

'Tis evening, and the moon above
Doth gloriously shine ;
And to the health of her I love
I drink this ruby wine.

II.

A thousand leagues my heart returns,
Far, far across the brine,
To her for whom my spirit yearns,
To whom I drink this wine.

III.

Her figure, graceful as the fawn,
And slender as the vine
From which the clustering grapes were torn
To make this glorious wine,

IV.

Would gain new strength, could she but print
Her foot beside the Rhine,

And her pale cheek would wear a tint
Transcending this red wine.

V.

The moon would have a softer charm,
A light still more divine,
If she were leaning on my arm
To whom I drink this wine.

VI.

If there is virtue in a prayer
That flows from lips of mine,
Her life shall be the Angels care,
Her happiness divine.





A WREATH OF SMOKE.

I.

WHEN clouds, o'ercharged with care and grief,
Seem gathering around,
'Tis in the rolled tobacco leaf
That solace can be found ;
With every puff there fades away
Some true or fancied sorrow,
And I am happy for the day,
Whate'er betide the morrow.

II.

The graceful wreaths of smoke I blow,
To yon blue Heavens ascend,
I bless each one, as off they go,
Like some departing friend ;
And wish that I could soar above,
Or had, like them, the power
To charm away from those I love
Each sad and dreary hour.



ACROSS THE WAY.

I.

THE moon is silvering old Park-Street steeple,
Likewise the trees,
And sleep is creeping o'er the Boston people
By slow degrees.

II.

I throw my casement open wide, and wheel
My easy-chair
To face the street, that I may breathe and feel
The cool night air.

III.

And while reclining here I muse and ponder
On life's decay,
A light illuminates a chamber yonder
Across the way.

IV.

And as the tongue of midnight tells the hour
From street to street,

I see upon the threshold of her bower
So pure and sweet,

V.

A Beauty standing, with a form excelling
All dreams of Art,
And feel a wonderful emotion swelling
My throbbing heart.

VI.

How gracefully she sets the flickering candle
Upon the floor,
The while she turns the little ivory handle
And bolts the door.

VII.

Then to the casement hastily advances
That charming maid ;
For one brief moment at the sky she glances,
Then pulls the shade.

VIII.

Ah ! will she shut out this extremely fine,
Clear night of June ?
Yes ! she unmarks not beauty so divine
E'en to the moon.

IX.

But think not, dear, your movements are unknown,
For, by the aid
Of Fancy, and the shadow that is thrown
Upon the shade,

X.

I feel, — and either were a faithful guide, —
Extremely certain
Of all that happens on the other side
Of that thick curtain.

XI.

Now of your tasteful garments you're divesting
Most gracefully,
To make yourself look still more interesting
In "*robe de nuit*."

XII.

Across the room I see your form so fair
Pass and repass,
And now you're standing taking down your hair
Before the glass.

XIII.

That hair abundant, whose rich golden curls
Delight beholders,

Loofed from confinement by a few quick twirls
Falls down your shoulders, —

XIV.

Shoulders as fragrant as the airs about
The funny South, —
Now, darling, take those pins directly out
Of your sweet mouth.

XV.

You leave the glaſs abruptly, and I find
That all is ſtill ;
How ſweet your pretty face muſt look behind
That ſnowy frill.

XVI.

And now you read a verſe of ſome ſweet Poet
You think divine,
Transported would I be, could I but know it
Were verſe of mine.

XVII.

And now upon the cuſhion by the chair
Your figure bends,
And from your lips a pure and heartfelt prayer
To Heaven aſcends.

XVIII.

“Nymph, in thy orisons be all my sins
Remembered” now,
And give one thought to me ere sleep begins
To touch your brow.

XIX.

So all is dark and quiet, you have just
Put out the light ;
Sleep, sleep protected by the Heaven you trust !
Fair Saint, — Good night.





NEW YEAR'S EVE.

I.

OLD Father Time with glaſs in hand
And ſcythe acroſs his ſhoulder,
Is by my ſide reminding me
That I am growing older ;
And ſadly ſays the kind old man,
In accents ſoft and clear,
“ My hour-glaſs I ſoon ſhall turn,
Then vaniſhes the year.”

II.

So from this long and graceful jar
I pour the fragrant wine,
And, when old Time turns up his glaſs,
I'll do the ſame to mine,
And drink to all upon the land,
And all upon the ſea,
And ſigh the while I bid Farewell
To Eighteen Fifty-Three.

III.

I'll grieve not for deceitful friends
Whose falseness I've detected,
But drink to those exalted hearts
I never have suspected,
Who changing not with every turn
Of Fortune's tipsy wheel,
Are ever grappled to my soul
With hooks of triple steel.

IV.

I'll drink to her who does not scorn
My rude unpolished verse,
Whose love would be a talisman
Though all the world should curse,
And who would smile upon the chain
With which I'd gladly bind her, —
I'll drink to her with all my heart,
And love her, — when I find her.





MISS SWEETBRIAR'S COURTSHIP.

A BALLAD.

I.

THERE flood, when happened some summers ago
The events of the following story,
A large stone hotel, as many folks know,
At the end of Nahant's promontory ;
And when they couldn't endure the heat,
Then all the world and its daughter,
Some of whom are "*élite*," but some very effete,
Would start for the salt sea-water.

II.

What be vies of feminine beauties rare,
Such as seen in a poet's dream are,
Going down to Nahant for the bracing air,
Have I met in that little steamer ;
And I thought it aware of its precious freight
And endowed with human sensation,
For every plank seemed very elate
And gave an extra vibration.

III.

Now of all the charmers who visited there,
To look at the broad Atlantic,
A few years since, was one who was fair,
Surpassingly fair and romantic ;
But as the story that I shall tell
Is a very veracious history,
The name of "*la plus belle des belles*"
Must remain forever a mystery.

IV.

Yet as names are very convenient things
To the poet who strikes his lyre,
And deeds of lovers and heroes sings,
I shall call her Miss Jane Sweetbriar ;
And this you will understand to be
But a fanciful appellation,
For her real name wouldn't be breathed by me
On any consideration.

V.

Now Jane Sweetbriar, — with her mamma, —
Was the very earliest comer,
For the rooms were engaged by her dear papa
Throughout the entire summer ;
But 'twas during the month of the sultry air,
When the fiery dog-star rages,

That occurred and transpired the little affair
I relate in the following pages.

VI.

Miss Jane Sweetbriar was always told
By her mother and other relations
She was destined to make, in the world so cold,
The greatest of all sensations ;
That her father was wealthy, and she was fair,
And by nature designed to wed
A reigning prince, — or the son and heir
Who'd be prince when his father was dead.

VII.

Now as this was instilled from her earliest youth,
Of course she grew very inflated,
Believing it all to be gospel truth,
And her princely lover awaited ;
And though gentlemen very well born and bred,
Accomplished, refined, and clever,
Were attentive, she bridled her haughty head
And distinctly said, " No, Sir, never."

VIII.

Then men began to keep very aloof,
As the vulgar would say, " fight shy,"
For they never will woo when there's pretty good
proof
It isn't of use to try.

And I heard full many a person say,
Who of charity hadn't a particle,
That her market she'd certainly overstay
And become a shop-worn article.

IX.

But one August day by the boat there came,
To adorn the hotel society,
A short young man with a very long name
Who was dressed with extreme propriety,
And as he danced so exceedingly well,
And sang to the ladies, divinely,
And was quite an agreeable sea-shore swell,
He got on, of course, quite finely.

X.

But that he might be the better received
By the girls, he to some confided
That he was a Duke, which they all believed,
But I will be blest if I did,
For I most audaciously dared surmise
That his Grace was an imposition,
But angry glances from beautiful eyes
Frowned on the foul suspicion.

XI.

Now female artillery brought to bear,
Opened at once their fire,

And the Duke soon fell at the exquisite pair
Of feet of Miss Jane Sweetbriar ;
And Jane was as pleasant as she could be,
And put on her airs and graces,
And it wasn't a difficult thing to see
She was going through all her paces.

XII.

And if any one asked where she could be found,
They'd say, "That foreigner has her,
Constantly walking her 'round and around
The ladies' upper piazza."
Ah, me ! If every balcony rail
Had the means of communication,
How many a soft and tender tale
It could tell of each sweet flirtation.

XIII.

Jane's delicate blood the Duke would stir,
As he'd tell, in his manner romantic,
Of the "Chateau in Spain" that was ready for her
Just over the briny Atlantic.
And then he'd describe the magnificent spot
That was so like a fairy scene,
Just as mendacious Claude Melnotte
Used to talk to the filly Pauline.

XIV.

And now one evening after tea,
As they sat in their room together,
Did Jane and her darling mother agree
That the Duke had views, but whether
'Twere best to consent at once, or defer,
Was a matter for consultation,
And mamma told Jane it was left to her,
After serious conversation.

XV.

Then Jane said, "Mother, I'm twenty-three,
And no prince has come hither to wed,
And I think on the whole it were better for me
To put up with a Duke instead."
And so 'twas decided. The following day
The rumor abroad was carried
That Jane Sweetbriar was "*fiancée*"
To the Duke, and would soon be married.

XVI.

Then how important the family grew,
And evinced an increased gentility,
Which proved that they were possessing a true
Republican love for nobility ;

And even papa declared that he
From trade would at once retire,
When on a ducal family tree
Was engrafted a fair Sweetbriar.

XVII.

It soon turned out that this elegant Duke,
(Oh, Jane, what a sad disaster !)
At a New York Inn was assistant cook,
And had robbed and fled from his master.
Now this employed the gossips awhile,
And I fancied that I detected
Many a very triumphant smile
On the faces of Jane's rejected.

XVIII.

To hear the remarks and perceive the sneers
Of her friends, was, of course, unpleasant,
So she went abroad to remain for years,
And there she resides at present ;
And doubtless noblemen mark her way,
And on Love's fleet wings pursue her,
But she'll never forget till her dying day
The counterfeit Duke, — her wooer.



TO THE BIG TREE ON BOSTON COMMON.

I.

WHEN first from Mother Earth you sprung,
Ere Puritans had come among
The savages to loose each tongue
 In psalms and prayers,
These "Forty Acres, more or less,"
Now putting on their summer dress,
Were but a "howling wilderness"
 Of wolves and bears.

II.

Most wondrous changes you have seen
Since you put forth your primal green
 And tender shoot ;
Three hundred years your life has spanned,
Yet calm, serene, erect you stand,
Of great renown throughout the land,
Though showing marks of Time's hard hand
 From crown to root.

III.

You, when a slender sapling, saw
The persecuted reach this shore
 And in their turn
Treat others just as they'd been treated ;
To mete the measure that's been meted,
 How man does yearn.

IV.

Of tales, perchance devoid of truth,
With which they would in early youth
 My heart appall,
Was one the gossips used to tell
About a witch so grim and fell
They hung on you for raising — Well,
 It wasn't Saul.

V.

Since you beheld the light of day
A race has nearly passed away, —
 A warlike nation,
Who oft with fire-water plied
Lost all their bravery and pride
And yielded to the rapid stride
 Of annexation.

VI.

Behold, a mightier race appears
 And high a vast Republic rears
 Her giant features,
 And westward steadily we drive
 The few poor Indian who survive
 And barely keep the race alive, —
 Degenerate creatures !

VII.

For, are we not the mighty Lords
 And Masters of all savage hordes
 (In our opinion) ?
 And when we with Inferiors deal
 Do not we use the iron heel
 And make them wince and writhe and feel
 Their Lords' dominion ?

VIII.

You heard the first rebellious hum
 Of voices, and the fife and drum
 Of revolution ;
 And heard the bells and welkin ring
 When they threw off old George the King
 And thereby gained a better thing, —
 Our Constitution.

IX.

And you still thrive and live to see
 The country prosperous and free,
 In spite of all
 The very sage prognostications
 Of prophets in exalted stations
 Who could foretell the fate of Nations,
 And said she'd fall.

X.

Majestic Tree, you've seen much worth
 From little Boston issue forth,
 And many men,
 Who love their kind and give their store
 To help the suffering and the Poor ; —
 Heaven bless their wealth and grant them more,
 I pray again.

XI.

And you shall see much more beside
 Ere to your root, old Boston's pride,
 The axe is laid ;
 And long, I trust, the time will be
 Ere Mayor and Council sit on thee
 And find with unanimity
 That you're decayed.

XII.

For you are still quite hale and stanch
Though here and there perchance a branch
Is flightly rotten,
And you will stand and hold your sway
When he who pens this rhyme to-day
Shall mingle with the common clay
And be forgotten.





A REVISIT.

I.

ONE bright and charming day last Fall
Some miles of ground I wandered over
And climbed o'er many a fence and wall
In the pursuit of quail and plover ;
But all my toil was vain and fruitless,
My fowling-piece not once I fired,
The expedition proved quite bootless,
And I became extremely tired.

II.

The day declined, — the Sun was setting,
As is its custom, in the West,
And I, this world of care forgetting,
Reclined beneath a tree to rest ;
But ere my drowsy senses failed me
A stalwart farmer I descried,
Who from his market-wagon hailed me,
And asked me if I'd like to ride.

III.

“ I live in Guilford, next to Stow,
You’ll see it from the hill quite plain,
I’ll drive you there and you can go
To Boston in the evening train.”
So, thankful for the invitation
That honest Rusticus had offered,
I left my gruffy situation
And took the seat so kindly proffered.

IV.

“ So, that is Guilford, — I am glad
To see the place ; I well remember
I passed some months there when a lad, —
Bless me, the tenth of next November
Will make just twenty years since I
Went there a graceless little scholar
(Alas ! How quickly Time slips by !)
In corduroys and ruffled collar.

V.

“ I boarded with old Parson Short,
Whose dwelling stood beside the hill.”
“ The Parson’s house I’ve lately bought.”
“ Indeed ! is he not living still ? ”

“ You might have known he’d go at length
The way of finner and of faint.
At Eighty-five he lost his strength,
Then died, Sir, of his old complaint.”

VI.

“ Though crows, he was the best of men,
And I’ll not let his faults outlive him,
He’ll never box my ears again
And so I cordially forgive him
And trust that ’mid the stars and faints
He now partakes celestial joys,
Relieved of all his bad complaints,
The asthma, and unruly boys.

VII.

“ And where is white-haired Dr. Sloat ?
With venerable locks of snow ;
He used to make my boyish throat
A channel for Elixir Pro.
I think I see his little shop, —
His bookcase, with its queer old fixtures
And stuff’d gray owl upon the top
That seemed to guard the pills and mixtures.

VIII.

“ The map of Europe on the wall,
The grinning skull upon the shelf ;

His patients, — did he kill them all ? ”

“ He did, and then he killed himself,
For feeling out of sorts one day
He took his celebrated pill,
Then died, and since, I’m glad to say
We haven’t had a person ill.”

IX.

“ Ah ! There’s the pond I used to swim in,
And gather fragrant water-lilies
To give the sweetest of young women,
Who lived near where the cider-mill is.
Yes ! she my very earliest flame was,
(At ten Love’s very hard to smother,)
Matilda Jane her charming name was, —
She’s now a wife, I trust, and mother.”

X.

Our drives, like all drives, had an end,
We reached the parsonage at last ;
“ Alas ! ” said I, “ my worthy friend,
This sets me thinking of the Past ;
I recollect the spot right well,
The very woodpile seems the same ;
And there’s my chamber in the L,
To which no sunbeams ever came.

XI.

“ The venerable tree that bore
Those pears so puckery and hard,
Is standing, as it did of yore,
Right in the middle of the yard ;
And there’s the church, — I see the vane
Is pointing still to sou’-sou’-west ;
It always did, — but why complain
Of aught that does its very best ? ”

XII.

I’ll take a feat on yonder wall
The while I’m waiting for the train,
My bygone joys and griefs recall,
And live my boyhood o’er again ;
But stay ! if life I’ve found is not
Just what my youthful fancy painted,
And I revisit this old spot
With care and sorrow well acquainted,

XIII.

And if no gentle heart is near me,
Beating responsive to my own,
To aid, to counsel, and to cheer me,
But I Life’s battle fight alone ;
Why should I rend the veil apart
That keeps the Past from coming o’er me,

To cast a shadow on my heart,
When I've the Future all before me ? ”

XIV.

There still are prizes worth the strife,
And Fame and Honor to the gainer ;
The soul that takes sad views of life
Should let this wholesome truth sustain her ;
My heart, less buoyant than of yore,
Still asks of Fortune prosperous breezes,
I've pushed my shallop from the shore,
Its fate to be what Heaven pleases.





TO A CLASSMATE.

“We have heard the chimes at midnight.”

HENRY IV., SECOND PART.

I.

OLD times come o'er me, and I fain would hear
Something of one my heart holds ever dear, —

Whether he's living ;

Oh, can it be that he I love has gone

Whence there is no return, to that long bourn ?

I've my misgiving.

II.

So now, my friend, for want of something better,
I'll send this very short and rhyming letter,

To ascertain

If you still live, and recollect the chimes

We've heard at midnight. Those delightful times

Come not again !

III.

And how oft times to Fancy's realms we'd mount,

And drink deep draughts — from the Pierian fount,

To banish cares ;

Then bivalve broils that marred the night's repose,
And then the larks, — I mean with which we rose
In time for prayers !

IV.

Our class is scattered. Some by trade have thriven
And some have laid their treasure up in heaven,
(A safe investment,)
And there are some the young idea who teach,
And some who practise, some who only preach,
But here's no jest meant.

V.

Some live in town, their quiet way pursuing,
Who would be pleased to hear what you are doing,
And how you are ;
So write us word, in prose, or woo the Muse ;
That you do either well, whene'er you choose,
We're quite aware.

VI.

How are your talents ? Have they run to waste ?
Do you still write, or have you lost your taste
For the poetic ?
Are you religious ? Have you joined the church ?
And have you found, or are you still in search
Of the Æsthetic ?

VII.

Do you find aught that gives you satisfaction ?
Does life present to you the same attraction
 It did “ lang syne ? ”
Or have your hopes of winning fame and glory,
And being widely known, in song and story
 Vanished, like mine ?

VIII.

Unless you’ve sadly changed, I know you’ve gained
The peace that’s purchased by a life unstained,
 Upright and moral ;
More satisfactory than vulgar praise,
And better, nobler far, than poets’ bays,
 Or heroes’ laurel.

IX.

Write me and tell me how you pass the time,
In your delightful and far-distant clime
 Of fruits and flowers.
But ere I close, perhaps you’d like to know
Of some with whom you passed, a while ago,
 Such pleasant hours.

X.

Well ; Kate still plays her tinkling guitar,
And sits and gazes at that favorite star
 She named for you,

And sighs and languishes, and rolls her eye ;
She thinks you're coming back ! (At one time I
Believed that true.)

XI.

And as for Caroline, she took offence,
Merely because I said she wanted sense !
So we don't speak.
Poor little Sue, with whom you used to ride,
Last June was married ; and the darling died
Within a week !

XII.

How could you find it in your heart to leave her !
She was a splendid girl ; in fact, I never
Have seen a finer.
Her sister Jane — whom, doubtless, you remember —
Married a missionary, last November,
And went to China.

XIII.

And now, farewell ! — my horse is at the door ;
I'm for a ride, and therefore can't say more.
I really miss you,
And mean to write again, some future day,
But now I've merely time enough to say,
God bless you.



A COURSE OF BARK.

Of Peter Van Duyfen, a Dutchman by birth,
But a toper by habit and tanner by trade,
Who for many a year but encumbered the earth,
Yet at last of the Church was an ornament made,
Whose true reformation
And regeneration
So struck with surprise every friend and relation,
Astonished his neighbors, delighted his wife,
(Who had long felt aggrieved by his dissolute life):
And the cause of his sudden return to the fold,
Of which the particulars never were told,
And have hitherto been so enveloped in mystery,
The beneficent muse
Will no longer refuse
To relate the authentic and wonderful history.

Now, Peter perceived not the shame and disgrace
Of a thickness of speech and a rubicund face,
And the name he had gained of "a very hard case;"
And the deeper he drank
The more deeply he sank,
Till his body was nought but an alcohol tank.

The day had long passed since he offered his reasons
 For constant libations, at all times and seasons ;
 And though such apologies seldom are found,
 Nor supported by reasoning very profound,

Yet I never would sneer at them,
 Laugh at or jeer at them,
 Or hurl an expression uncommonly queer at them,
 For they prove that their maker is fully awake
 To the fact that he runs 'gainst the views of society,
 And feels himself called on excuses to make,
 Just to show he's not lost to all sense of propriety.

Mr. A. takes a drop for a pain in his head,
 And he thinks it will cure him without any question ;

Mr. B. drinks because he has oft heard it said

A little good brandy assists the digestion ;

Mr. C. will remark he's been ill for a week ;

Mr. D. has a very bad pain in his cheek ;

Mr. E. fears the salad may possibly hurt him ;

Mr. F. has the blues, and he drinks to divert him ;

The powerful argument offered by G.,
 Is that, much to his joy, he has lately been told
 Hot whisky and water is good for a cold ;

And so it goes on down to X., Y., and Z.
 The reasons for what a man wishes to do,
 Though oftentimes weak, yet are never a few.

I once knew a man so addicted to grog
That he'd drink till his senses were lost in a fog,
Because he'd been working, he said, like a dog.
I presume that the meaning he wished to convey
Was, of course, that he'd been working hard all the
day ;

But, as far as my own small experience goes,
The work that all those that belong to the race
Called canine, perform, is, in some funny place,
(Forever preferring the large cellar-doors,)
With their jaws softly cushioned on both their fore-
paws,

To sniff off the flies as they light on their nose, —

And I always opined

He was that way inclined,

For, though earnestly seeking, I never could find,
That science or art or religion or trade
Had ever derived the least possible aid
From any exertion he ever had made.

Now, I advocate always excessive sobriety,
Though I never have joined a tee-total society,

And might not say nay,

On a very hot day,

To a very large goblet of champagne "*frappé*,"
Regardless of all Mrs. Grundy might say,
And provided, of course, there was nothing to pay ;
Yet, 'tis better to keep from temptation away,

For I learned when a lad, in a school of design,
What a very hard matter is *drawing a line*.

But it seems, while I pen this irregular metre,
That I'm saying uncommonly little of Peter.
So, without more ado, I will briefly relate
His narrow escape from a danger he ran,
By which he was saved from a terrible fate,
And instantly made a respectable man.

Though Peter, I've said, was a tanner by trade,
Yet a fortune by tanning he never had made, —
For business of any kind needs attention,
A fact it is never amiss to mention, —
And his customers fled from him, one after one,
When they found that his work was most wretchedly
done,

And saw what a rig he was trying to run.
Then he'd nothing to do, yet for spirits he'd spend,
And soon discovered, with many regrets,
That *liquor* will never *liqui*-date debts,
And his course must speedily come to an end.
His creditors clamored for their demands,
And his tannery soon passed out of his hands ;
With the brindle dog he was forced to part,
Which touched, though it didn't renew, his heart.
His wife worked on in grief and pain,
That her child shouldn't cry for bread in vain ;

And she struggled and hoped, as women will,
While Peter sank lower and lower still ;
Soliciting alms of each passer-by,
Drinking throughout the day his fill,
And lodging at night in the nearest sty.
If I picture him truly, you'll say I draw
As wretched a being as ever you saw.
But still, in the midst of his downward course,
Would arise a feeling of deep remorse,
That would lead him oft in sorrow at night —
When ghosts and goblins gibber and moan,
Who are never beheld by the morning light —
To visit the tannery once his own ;
And one stormy night, as he staggered along,
Meandering the hides and the vats among,
While the wind blew high and the night was dark,
There came a gust that took off his hat ;
He tried to catch it, but reeled and fell,
And down he went with a fearful yell,
Tumbling headlong into a vat,
There to go through with *a course of bark*.

Down he went, and he splashed and spluttered,
And fierce were the cries that the victim uttered ;
But fruitless all, — there was no one near, —
Not a human being with ears to hear,
And a heart to feel, and a rope to throw ;
Yet, had there been, I can scarcely tell,

(For what others will do no one can know,)
If they wouldn't have thought it just as well,
And have left him to tan with the hides below.

Then Peter's agony soon began,
For his past career appeared before him,
And he knew himself a detested man,
And that none would in the least deplore him ;
He knew repentance was all too late,
That he soon must yield to impending fate,
Down, down to sink, and there to stay,
Till some, Heaven knows how distant, day,
When they'd find him tanned in the usual way ;
Then how they'd laugh, and speculate whether
He'd make on the whole a durable leather,
And load him with well-deserved abuse,
And say that for once they'd make him of use,
And then into soles they'd cut up his body,
So well preserved by the tan and the toddy.

But while this rushed across his brain,
He twice went down and rose again ;
And now his strength was failing fast,
And weaker grew each vain endeavor —
One bubbling shriek — it was the last
Of Peter, who then sank forever, —
Or would, had not that deathly cry
Struck on the ear of a passer-by,

In the shape of the same intelligent brute
That Peter had owned in his best estate ;
And now of his kindness he reaped the fruit,
By being saved from a fearful fate ;
For this most grateful of brindled Towzers,
With a bound, and a dash,
And a howl, and a splash,
Jumped into the vat, as quick as a flash,
And fastened his jaws in a leg of his trowsers.

Ah ! how one's experience constantly teaches
What many a stern and cold moralist preaches,
That Gilead possesses for all men a balm,
And a storm is a certain forerunner of calm,
And when all things appear
Most dark, cheerless, and drear,
That circumstance proves that the daylight is near ;
For, when grief and despondency wholly enslave us,
And sad the forebodings and fears of the heart,
When it seems as if nought from destruction could
save us,
And the last rays of hope in the darkness depart,
Unlooked-for assistance will raise and assuage us,
Although adventitious, yet most advantageous.

But the course of events to delay by reflections,
In a writer of tales, is the worst of objections ;
And I think I shall run little hazard in stating,

That when such a person abandons narrating,
And takes in its stead both to prosing and prating,
He's a bore of a size that there's no overrating ;
And one's hero to leave at a critical time
Should be reckoned by readers not less than a crime ;
 And I ought to have said
 That Peter, half-dead,
Was rescued when hope had entirely fled,
And have told you at once how his canine preserver,
By tugging with *dog-gedness*, vigor, and fervor,
 Through the darkness a guide,
 Brought him close to the side
Of the vat, where a rope had been recently tied.
If a man when he's drowning will catch at a straw,
Why, of course, he will catch at a rope all the more ;
So Peter struck out, and at last made a grasp
At the rope, and held on with the muscular clasp
Of a man who is just at his very last gasp ;
And there he hung for the rest of the night,
Till the morning broke with its streaks of light,
 When several workmen, who happened to pass,
Saved both of the brutes from their perilous state,
And they carried Peter right out of the gate,
 Across the road to a field of grass,
And there they punched him, and rolled him over ;
And you'll not deny when I venture to state
That, though in the grass, yet he wasn't in clover ;
But success attended the operation,

And restored the suspended animation,
By bringing on the proper pulsation ;
And he came to himself, and then went to his wife,
A different man for the rest of his life.

No muse of mine possesses the art
To tell in any poetical strain
Of the rapture pervading a woman's heart,
Whatever her rank and worldly station,
When she finds that her prayers were not made in
vain,
For of joy that seems a foretaste of Heaven
A true portrayal can never be given,
But must ever be left to imagination.

I fear I'm tedious, so I'll briefly say,
That Peter lived from that eventful day —
Or night — an honest, prudent, upright man ;
And many a long-lost friend of old
Held forth his hand when he was told,
That for the future Peter had a plan.
By toil and prudence, and some slight assistance,
He, step by step, regained the ground he'd lost.
To all temptation he made fierce resistance,
Thinking experience was not worth its cost.
Now first at meeting, loudest in the prayer,
You'd scarce suppose he'd e'er from virtue drifted ;

And many a person I have heard declare,
That in exhorting he seemed truly gifted.
Soon fortune smiled, for vice was at an end,
And though 'twas humble, he adorned his station ;
To all good projects was a zealous friend,
And gave his son a liberal education ;
And oft in after years, when old and fat,
The village boys at eve would cluster round him,
To hear him tell the story of the Vat,
And how poor dead and buried Towzer found him.
Perchance the precepts that he threw around
Did not fall profitless on barren ground.





TO THE MERMAID.

“Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee.”

HAMLET.

I.

MYSTERIOUS HYBRID ! Near the Fjee Isles
You were entrapped, they say, one Summer's eve,
When, unsuspecting of the seaman's wiles,
You sweetly sung, (but this I can't believe,)
With execution that outrivalled GRISI,
Arias from operas by no means easy.

II.

Strange denizen of somewhere in the deep,
You come to us so very well preserved
That we might think you in the tranquil sleep
Your innocence and beauty well deserved,
Although your graceful figure's quite erect ;
For what from Mermaids could we not expect ?

III.

But there's no power now in your dark eyes
To look with scorn upon the dandy's suit,

You answer not to beauty's smiles and sighs ;
Then must that heart be stilled, that tongue be
mute ;
And this glass case, excluding you from air,
Proves the sad fact that life is absent there.

IV.

I promised me a very pleasant task,
And hoped to pass the evening *tête-à-tête* ;
There's many a question that I wished to ask,
Concerning all the customs of your state ;
I'm getting up a book, and looked to you
For stores of information strange and new.

V.

I wished to know if Mermaids had a king,
Or chose a president each year or two, —
Had stringent laws, for that's the sort of thing
To make the populace their duty do ;
Or lived together in a crazed community,
Where each did as he listed, with impunity ;

VI.

And all that happens in those coral groves
That you inhabit in the realms below ;
If you write tender verses to your loves,
If there's a place where naughty Mermaids go, —

If you have lectures in the Winter season, —
And if your Poets write both rhyme and reason ?

VII.

If you have Mermaid lawyers and divines,
And if the last say everything is vanity ;
Whether you speculate in copper mines,
And are not Mermaids subject to insanity ;
If pure salt water's all you have to drink,
And if your tails don't sometimes get a kink ?

VIII.

Fond of the water you must surely be,
But do you have regattas every year ?
And do you navigate the briny sea
In sea-weed barks, — or use your tails to steer
Some scooped-out tortoise shells from grot to grot ;
And is there any one who owns a yacht ?

IX.

Are any of the Mermaids politicians ?
Do they fulfil each promise to the letter ?
And do you find, if you employ physicians,
That of their stuff the less you take the better
Your health becomes ? In fact, I'm very sure
You must be patrons of the " Water Cure."

X.

Do you prohibit smoking in the streets ?
Do you confine the voting to the males ?
What is the salutation when one meets
Another Mermaid ? Do you shake your tails ?
Is charity much practised in the sea,
Or do you fancy scandal with your tea ?

XI.

Have you the Magazines and the Reviews ?
Do any of your spinsters have the vapors ?
How soon do you obtain the steamer's news ?
And pray, do all the Mermaids take the papers ?
Do your young men do military duty ?
And what's the standard market-price of putty ?

XII.

But this is useless, — the grim tyrant, Death,
Has placed his icy hand upon your brow ;
Had I been near, to catch your parting breath,
(It's very safe for me to say so, now,)
I might have gained a mass of information
That now is lost to me and to the nation.

XIII.

I grieve to think some infidels there be
Who smile in scorn whene'er your name they hear,

Make it a point to disbelieve in thee,
And dare to speak with supercilious sneer,
Who say you are a wondrous incongruity,
A specimen of Yankee ingenuity.

XIV.

As for myself, I'm willing to believe
In all that travellers delight to tell ;
I think the mesmerizers don't deceive,
I frown on those who say that you're a "fell ;"
I think all the magicians superhuman,
And will believe the Giantess a woman.

XV.

I place a trust in the Aërial Ship,
My love for the Hydrarchos is quite fervent,
I've cruised about our coast to get a peep
At my much flighted friend, the great Sea Serpent.
A man can't put himself to nobler uses
Than taking fides with those the world abuses.

XVI.

And now, farewell ! There's more that I could say,
For my regard becomes each moment stronger,
But I'll postpone it for some other day ;
This won't be read, if it is any longer ;
You'll triumph yet, despite the sceptic's laugh,
Marvellous specimen of half and half !



A NIGHT IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS.

HOW THE WRITER PLAYED THE FRIEND OF HUMANITY, —
THE RESULT OF THE SAME, AND AN INSTRUCTIVE MORAL
DEDUCED THEREFROM.

It was a drear December night,
My duties were performed, —
The Chairman, as he paid my fee,
Remarked how hard it stormed ;
Perhaps he thought the lecture poor —
Or, didn't think at all,
Or didn't care what might that night
The lecturer befall ;
I asked him where the Tavern was, —
He pointed down the street,
So Tavernward I bent my steps
And faced the cutting fleet.
“What ho, within there, House ! I say !
Oh, bless your scraggy head !
Grim Boniface, and give to me
This stormy night a bed !”
He faintly smiled and said to me
He'd do the best he could,

While I, as faintly smiling back,
 Replied, I hoped he would.
 "I think," said he, "I have a room
 That has a bed to spare ;"
 "Enough," said I, "my wearied frame
 Is anxious to be there."
 He led the way, — I followed him
 To — I forget the number ;
 Two beds were there, in one I saw
 A traveller in slumber.
 Five minutes later, and disrobed
 And gazing at the ceiling,
 I felt the charms of drowsiness
 O'er all my senses stealing ;
 But when "the early village" clock
 Announced that it was four,
 I was awakened by a yawn
 That sounded like a roar,
 I flily cast my eyes about
 And saw my unknown friend
 In very slim apparel, and
 A-fitting up on end ;
 He rubbed his eyes, he scratched his nose,
 He listened to the storm,
 His teeth they chattered in his head
 As if he wasn't warm ;
 And while I lay and looked at him,
 I wondered more and more,

And saw him glance towards my bed
And step upon the floor,
Then hurry on his clothes and tie
His tippet round his throat,
And put his head inside his hat
And button up his coat,
Then walk up to the glass and take
His razor in his hand, —
The while on every pore of mine
Did watery globules stand ;
I thought he meant to kill me, and
Made ready for a spring,
But it seems he wasn't thinking
Of any such a thing,
For he put it in his carpet-bag
And slowly turned the key,
And as he drew it from the lock
He looked again at me ;
And then the sole hypothesis
By which these movements mystic
I could explain, was that the man
Had turns somnambulistic.
My kindly feelings rose at this, —
Thought I, this luckless stranger
I must observe, to see that he
Comes not to any danger ;
He took his carpet-bag and left
And softly closed the door, —

One instant, and I stood erect
 In middle of the floor,
 Then dressed myself with greater speed
 Than ever yet did mortal,
 And seized my hat, crept down the stairs,
 And issued from the portal ;
 I saw him cross a turnip-field
 And then the turnpike take,
 And as I thought he was *asleep*,
 I followed in his *wake* ;
 I wondered where he meant to go,
 And fancied, with a shiver,
 His object was to drown himself
 On coming to the river ;
 But no ; he safely crossed the bridge,
 While I crept close behind,
 Prepared to seize him if he seemed
 To suicide inclined ;
 He then pushed on to where there stood
 A little way-side inn,
 And there he knocked until he woke
 The bar-keeper within ;
 I, looking through the window-panes,
 Distinctly saw him take
 A glass of something hot and strong
 As if he were awake ;
 Then out he came and on he sped,
 In seeming desperation,

For three long miles until he reached
A lonesome railway station ;
The truth flashed out, — he meant to throw
Himself across the track,
And so Humanity forbade
My longer holding back,
And as the day was breaking fast
I felt a trifle bolder,
So walked up to the wretched man
And slapped him on the shoulder ;
He turned on me most tiger-like
And said, “Confound your eyes !
Just you be careful how you take
A fellow by surprise.”
I stammered out — because the case
Admitted no dissembling —
That I had followed him for miles
With all my members trembling,
For fear left into danger’s jaws
He might perchance be brought
While he was walking in his sleep,
As I sincerely thought.
He looked at me from head to foot,
Then sneeringly he said,
“You’re either drunk or cracked or else
The fools are not all dead.”
And thus for merely yielding to
The dictates of humanity,

I was accused of drunkenness,
Of folly, and insanity ;
A lesson then and there was taught, —
To mind my own affairs,
And in spite of all temptation,
To let other folks mind theirs.





TO A BUTTERFLY AT SEA.

I.

'Tis very kind, though vastly queer,
That you should call to see me here,
 And I'll address you ;
For though I cannot understand
How you came out so far from land,
And you'll not tell, yet there's my hand,
 I greet and bless you !

II.

But should as soon expect to see
Moss-rose-buds on the main cross-tree ;
 (Ah, how I'd pet them !)
Or 'round about the capstan's foot
A bed of violets taking root,
And telling me, although they're mute,
 Not to forget them ! —

III.

Or in the shadow of the sail
A lily lifting up her pale
 And lovely face,

As on the ratlines to espy
A gay and brilliant butterfly,
Seeking in vain, with anxious eye,
 One flowery place.

IV.

Sail on with us, — there's no objection,
And you can trust in my protection,
 For you're to me
Suggestive of green fields and flowers,
Woodbine and honeysuckle bowers,
And call to mind delightful hours,
Of which, when sadness overpowers,
 I think at sea.

V.

The pantry-door shall ne'er be closed,
And not a wish shall be opposed,
 If you'll remain.
The sugar-bowl shall yield its sweets,
We'll give you some luxurious treats,
And ope our many potted meats,
 And best champagne.

VI.

Go, range the cabin through and through,
And trust me when I swear to you,
 As I'm a sinner,

That, should the steward thwart your wishes,
I'll break his head with his own dishes,
And hurl his carcass to the fishes,
For dinner.

VII.

You heed me not ; and now you're gone,
To tempt the mighty deep alone
And unprotected.
No ! One who hears the raven's cry,
And marks each sparrow fall and die,
Watches o'er all with sleepless eye
And even a simple butterfly
Is not neglected.

VIII.

And he the rhymester, who to-day
Has wooed you in an idle lay,
Is but like you
A wanderer across the seas,
And dreams away these days of ease,
Entranced with idle fantasies,
Sweet, though untrue.

IX.

And though to serious contemplation,
And calm and pious meditation,
Too oft a stranger,

Knows that the strong, protecting arm,
That can subdue the fiercest storm,
Is thrown around his powerless form,
In time of danger.





AN ANSWER TO AN INVITATION TO DINE

————— “cui corpus porrigitur.”

VIRGIL.

I.

I've just received your invitation
To a rare banquet, thus you 'clept it,
And much regret my situation
Is such that I cannot accept it ;
No dining out is there for me now,
My illness is sufficient reason ;
And could you but look in you'd see now
That I am laid up for a season.

II.

In payment for my sins I've caught a
Distressing cold, and am in bed,
With napkins wet with rum and water
Twisted around my aching head.
It seems as if that nameless Gent.,
With cloven foot and fable coat,
On my annihilation bent,
Had fixed his talons in my throat.

III.

My voice, whose tones, if not o'er pleasant,
Would doubtless very much delight you,
Is silent, and if you were present,
I could not say what now I write you.
You'll find it not an easy task
Deciphering this wretched scrawl,
But he can some indulgence ask
Who writes in bed against the wall.

IV.

So when you read this lucubration,
I must request you'll not be critical ;
Consider that my situation
Is not by any means poetical.
A blister that could draw a wagon
Ufurps possession of my chest ;
It seems as if a fiery dragon
Had made his home upon my breast.

V.

I'm being now, like gold, refined
With very fierce and raging fires,
But not exactly of the kind
That wit or verse-making inspires.
With not a thing to eat or drink,
One can't be very bright or merry,

I'd feel much better now, I think,
If I could have a glaſs of Sherry.

VI.

I'll own the wine-cup I have drained
Since I've been ſtretched upon my back,
But then the wine the cup contained
Is known as Wine of Ipecac ;
And that, my candid mind confeſſes,
(A fact I feel convinced that you know,)
Does not alleviate diſtreſſes
As much as your delicious "Juno."

VII.

Juſt as the clock is ſtriking five
I'll know you're ſitting down to dinner,
And at that time, if I'm alive,
I'll pledge you in a draught of Senna ;
And ſigh to loſe thoſe ſcintillations
From wit that never yet was ſpiteful,
And all your brilliant coruſcations
Of fancy that are ſo delightful.

VIII.

Please give your gueſts to underſtand
I'd gladly meet them at that hour,
Were not miſfortune's heavy hand
Upon me with reſiſtleſs power ;

And though "*in propria persona*"
To visit them I'll not be able,
My spirit yet may have the honor
To come and rap upon the table.

IX.

When rising from the board the crowd are
"*Vino ciboque*" quite "*gravatus*,"
I shall be taking Dover's powder
And mourning my unhappy "*status*."
Then let me hope they'll kindly think
Of him who pens this trifling stanza,
And filling up their glasses, drink
Confusion to the Influenza !





A CHARCOAL SKETCH.

“ Perhaps, and then again perhaps not.”

Familiar Saying.

I MEET a fellow often in my way,
Urging a horse and wagon through the streets,
And shouting “ Charcoal ! ” to each one he
meets ;

I passed him in the thoroughfare to-day
But did not ridicule his features grim, —
His ragged coat, and hat without a brim.

Thought I, “ That fellow in those shabby clothes,
Driving all day his shapeless horse and cart,
Owes nothing to the tailor or his art,

Like many of our gallant city beaux ;
And would that all of us, like him, could say,
Each night, that our pursuits throughout the day
Had left no tarnish harder to erase
Than what he has upon his hands and face !
There’s not a spot of black upon his heart,
It’s all upon his face and hands and cart,

And he may stand a better chance to go
To Heaven than I, or many that I know."

But this was Fancy's work, and we,
Though better dressed, perchance, are just as good
as he.





THE JILTED KNIGHT.

A BALLAD.

I.

A GALLANT knight and lady bright,
 (They termed them thus of yore,)
Beneath a tree, love, constancy,
 And truth forever swore.

II.

“My dearest love ! the Heavens above
 Record the vows we’ve made ;
With many a knight I go to fight
 Upon a great crusade ;

III.

’Tis honor calls me from my halls
 And far, my love, from thee,
With my good sword, from Paynim horde
 The Holy Land to free.

IV.

It rends my heart from thee to part,
But love must yield to duty ;
For valor, Fame shall spread my name
As far as thine for beauty.

V.

And though, alas ! a twelvemonth pass,
My truth is pledged forever, —
You'll not forget our souls have met ? ”
The lady answered, “ Never.”

VI.

One long, last sip of her sweet lip —
One pressure of the hand —
The knight bestrode his steed and rode
Towards the Holy Land.

VII.

The lady fighed and sobbed and cried
To see him ride away ;
In wretched plight she passed that night
And part of the next day.

VIII.

But ere the sun its course had run
Another knight came by, —

She smoothed each trefs, arranged her drefs,
And wiped her tearful eye.

IX.

This knight he fwore, though ne'er before
He'd fet his eyes upon her,
That he'd prefer to live for her
Than die for empty honor.

X.

She ceafed her fighs, and raifed her eyes
That late with tears had gliftened,
And could but hear thofe vows sincere, —
Becaufe in footh fhe liftened.

XI.

Perchance fhe thought, as life was fhort,
One lover near at hand
Was worth at leaft ten in the Eaft, —
Far in the Holy Land.

XII.

For juft fuppose that Paynim foes
Should flay that abfent lover, —
Slight good 'twould do that fhe'd been true,
When Love's fweet dream was over.

XIII.

As years advance, less grows their chance
To captivate mankind :
This fact, they say, will often sway
A lovely woman's mind.

XIV.

A bitter truth it is, that youth
And beauty do not tarry,
So ere they go, all maidens know
'Tis better that they marry.

XV.

One ne'er would end did he pretend
To state how some will use
Pure logic's art, their want of heart
And falseness to excuse.

XVI.

O'er meadow, dale, and hill and vale
The bridal bells rang out,
While one true knight in bloody fight
Was putting scores to rout.

XVII.

'Neath burning sun brave deeds were done,
Through love of her and glory, —

That her dear name by his great fame
Might live in song and story.

XVIII.

Her scarf he wore his breast before, —
Upon his helm her glove, —
Some Poet sings, what foolish things
Wife men will do for love.

XIX.

Where lances gleamed and banners streamed
And life-blood ebbed away,
Oh, would that knight had lost the fight
And fallen in the fray !

XX.

Thrice happy he right peacefully
To sleep among the dead,
Than live to find in womankind
His faith forever fled.

MORAL.

XXI.

Now should you be by Love's decree
Possessor of a treasure,
Whose loss would make you loth to take
In life the slightest pleasure,

XXII.

There's one great rule, and he's a fool
Whoever dares discard it : —
Go not afar to scenes of war,
But stay at home and guard it.

XXIII.

Scorn confidence, — let common sense
Alone be your adviser,
Or else some morn you'll wake forlorn,
A sadder man, and wiser.





ROMEO MONTAGUE TO JULIET CAPULET.

I.

DEAR JULIET, come down from your lattice so high,
I've no ladder with which I can reach you ;
There's no dew on the grass and the walks are quite
dry,
So, dearest, descend, I beseech you !
Love-making you'll find very nice, if you'll try,
And I'm just the person to teach you.

II.

I have come over roads very stony and rough,
And through perils severe that beset me,
Nor tarried to ask of each Capulet gruff
If to love you he's willing to let me ;
I'd have proved myself made of most obstinate stuff
To each and to all, had they met me.

III.

At a very great risk to my clothes and my neck,
I have clambered right over the wall,
And the broken glass-bottles its summit that deck
Did not scare or restrain me at all, —

Though I knew I would be a most terrible wreck,
If by chance I should happen to fall.

IV.

Nor fear I the sword of your big, burly brother,
Who, perhaps, now is hovering nigh,
But I'll dare every danger each night for another
Bright glance from your dark rolling eye.
It's no easy thing, let me tell you, to smother
The flame that is lighted on high !

V.

He who ne'er has been wounded may well jest at
scars,
And to overcome peril essay,
Broken bottles set endwise, nor locks, bolts, and bars,
Can keep a true lover away ;
Then by the soft light of the innocent stars,
Lift to all the sweet things I've to say.

VI.

It seems you object to my family name, —
I would I'd my visiting card ;
For although for my name 'tis not I who's to blame,
Yet I'd tear in ten pieces the word ;
But for such a slight cause to extinguish Love's flame
Would truly be vastly absurd.

VII.

The flower we fancy so much as a rose
 Would assuredly seem just as sweet,
 And be as agreeable to eyes and to nose
 If we called it a carrot or beet,
 And I as John Smith or Tom Brown, I suppose,
 Would appear just as well in the street.

VIII.

So in order no more to be under a ban,
 And denied an access to your door,
 I'll have my name changed just as soon as I can,
 Nor be Romeo Montague more ;
 To think aught a sacrifice — I'm not the man —
 That is done for the girl I adore.

IX.

Then, Juliet, descend from that balcony high,
 I've a sermon on Love that I'll preach you, —
 We'll take a nice walk 'round the garden so dry,
 So, dearest, come down, I beseech you ;
 Love-making, I think, you will like if you try,
 And I know 'twill be pleasant to teach you.



THE REASON WHY.

I.

HER eye was like the violet
When morning dews are on it,
Her cheek competed with the rose
She wore in her Spring bonnet,
Her lips were cherries in the sun
Just ripening on the stem,
Her teeth were like the glistening pearls
On royal diadem.

II.

Her figure was superb, — her grace
Seemed really superhuman,
For Nature sometimes does her best
To beautify a Woman ;
In sooth she was a lovely thing
For Memory to recall,
And yet he wooed her not — because
Her dividends were small.



TO MY UMBRELLA.

I.

My well-tried friend, we've been together
Through many a change of wind and weather
 Three years and more ;
While strolling down the London Strand,
To satisfy a shower's demand
And save my clothes, I made a stand
At what appeared a "Hat, cap, and
 Umbrella store."

II.

And then and there I purchased you,
The best of all that were on view,
 For one pound one,
And never since have felt regret
For what I paid ; you're worth it yet,
And I confess that getting wet
 Affords no fun.

III.

While looking at you through the smoke
(That now enshrouds me like a cloak)
 Of my cigar,

My Fancy, for the humor's sake,
A backward range essays to take,
And speak of what has helped to make
 You what you are.

IV.

Some tree that raised its branches high
As if to paint the azure sky,
 Was forced to fall,
And from a portion of its wood,
Your staff was made, so strong and good
That many a fearful gale has stood
 Nor cracked at all.

V.

From the deep bosom of the earth,
Where they experience quite a dearth
 Of light and air,
The miner with his pick and spade,
Has dug the ore from which were made
 The tips you wear.

VI.

A monster who affects the sea
Has been prevailed upon to be
 Harpooned 'till dead.
And from his great and mighty jaw

A substance, miscalled bone, they tore,
And fashioned it with knife and saw
Into some dozen rods or more
That you might spread.

VII.

Another monster, who beguiled
The time by roaming India's wild
Near Coromandel,
While gambolling upon the plain,
Despite, and for, his teeth was slain
That you for use, in case of rain,
Might have a handle.

VIII.

Your filken cover, — to be brief, —
Was once a simple mulberry-leaf
On mulberry-tree,
And now by processes I'll not
Mention, because I can't, is what
I plainly see.

IX.

Many a shower you have braved,
And many a coat and hat you've saved, —
Protecting thing !
All know there are not many ways
In which a rhymester ever pays

For benefits conferred, — his lays
Are sometimes all that he can raise,
So rest contented if your praise
I briefly sing.

X.

I've found you through all change the same, —
You've ne'er deserved that hateful name,
Fair-weather friend ;
Where'er I've been, on land or sea,
By day or night, you've stood by me
When storms arose, right gallantly,
Until the end.

XI.

I prize you, though you have no beauty,
For this, that you have done your duty
As if you knew it.
Now calm and quietly you stand
In reach of my extended hand,
Ready, when such is my command,
Again to do it.

XII.

When in a proper frame of mind
There's nought in which one cannot find
Instructive teaching,
That will improve him, if he'll lay it

Cloſe to his heart, and will obey it,
As much, with all reſpect I ſay it,
As pulpit preaching.

XIII.

I'll moralize, for ſoon or late,
Such is the ſtern decree of Fate,
An angel comes
With power to ſummon us away,
No choice have we to go or ſtay,
But that ſad word, Farewell, muſt ſay
To our dear homes.

XIV.

When to my life he puts the bound,
In one reſpect would I be found
Not unlike thee.
Ere yet by Death my limbs are chilled,
On this alone my hopes I build,
That when my beating heart is ſtilled
I may be thought to have fulfilled
My deſtiny.



OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES.

NO. I.

SAID James to John, "Pray tell me, Sir,
Why is it that the Devil,
In spite of all his naughtiness,
Can never be uncivil?"
Then John replied, "The answer's plain
To any mind that's bright, —
The *Imp o' Darknefs* ne'er can be
Considered *Imp o' Light*."

NO. II.

My Christian friend, I've heard it said
The highly valued rarity, —
A perfect wife, — with Satan has
One point of similarity;
For, while in sleep the Husband-man
Forgets his worldly cares,
She, to her credit be it said,
Then comes and *sews the tears*.

NO. III.

Old Paterfamilias called to his fide
Little Tommy, his wonderful fon,
And inquired, "How differs a hen with two wings
From a hen that posselles but one?"
Then Tommy replied, for the lad in the field
Of wit held extensive dominion,
"The distinction is small, for there seems but to be
A slight difference, Sir, of a *pinion*."

NO. IV.

Were you ever in Cork, Sir? was Foote asked one
day;
And the Actor replied in his humorous way,
That though in most cities of note he had been
Yet of Cork 'twas *the drawings* alone that he'd seen.

NO. V.

Said Johnfon, this galvanized goblet of lead
Shall be his who can sooneft assemble
His wits, and say when can a candle be said
A tombstone at all to resemble.
Then Jackson replied, with successful endeavor,
Extending his hand for the cup,
That a candle resembles a tombstone whenever
'Tis for any late husband set up.

NO. VI.

The Pilgrim o'er a desert wild
Should ne'er let want confound him,
For he at any time can eat
The *sand which is* around him.
It might seem odd that he could find
Such palatable fare,
Did not we know the fons of *Ham*
Were *bred* and *mustered* there.

NO. VII.

Jane fears to walk 'mid flowers in Spring,
Though each one fragrance distils,
Because her nerves are weak, and all
The plants are *shooting pistils*.

NO. VIII.

a rage to the office of Counsellor B.
Rushed a gallant militia commander
To learn whether "Jackass," as oft he was called,
Was a ground for an action of slander ;
The lawyer replied, " In some cases the term,
If not slanderous, at least is pseudonymous,
But in yours, (and for this I shall make you no
charge,)
I consider it merely synonymous.

NO. IX.

Blank's Poems fell on Julia's head,
Not long she bore the pain ; —
The Jury found she died of milk
And water on the brain.

NO. X.

I put my pen to this scrap of paper
To ask if you comprehend the relation
The entry-mat bears to the outside scraper ?
If you do, please reply without hesitation ;
But you don't, for your brain works exceedingly flow,
And you needn't smile in that imbecile way
When I say, *a step farther* ; for you didn't know,
And that isn't what you were just going to say.

NO. XI.

At church, Joe says, his manly heart
With true devotion swells ;
Disproving that — as some assert —
He's led there by *the Belles* ;
While Jane, the happiest of coquettes,
Whose eye no sorrow dims,
Most piously employs her time
In looking for *the Hims*.

NO. XII.

When Sambo, with a bull behind,
 Of life and limb in danger,
 Shuns any close acquaintance with
 The rude unpleasant stranger,
 No doubt, like Patriots of old,
 Should fear still leave him sense,
 He'd give, if nought for tribute, yet
 His "millions for *de fence*."

NO. XIII.

"Are there not too many *passages*
 In Plagiary's Play?"
 "Yes, so many that the meaning
 Has wholly lost its way."

NO. XIV.

The Philosopher who seeks
 The fabled stone in vain,
 Is like old Father Neptune,
 The Monarch of the Main;
 For no person in his senses
 The conclusion can resist,
 When I say, *he is a seeking*
What never did exist.

NO. XV.

The reason why a bear should seek
A dry-goods shop seems puzzling,
And so I'll state that there he'd want
Just nothing else but *muzzling*.

NO. XVI.

Byron asked Moore, "In Love wherein
Aught of resemblance lies
To the potato?" "Why!" said Moore,
"They both *shoot from the eyes*."
"That answer's good," rejoined my Lord,
In the general laughter sharing,
"But the likenefs that I fancied, was,
They both *decrease by paring*."

NO. XVII.

'Tis not caprice that moves the duck,
Throughout all times and seasons,
To disappear beneath the wave,
For it has *divers* reasons ;
And its return to light and air
Caprice does not direct, —
The reasons for this second move
Are *sundry*, I suspect.

NO. XVIII.

When Johnſon for a time diſſolved
 The conjugal relation,
 He told his wife he'd ſend her funds,
 Which was a conſolation ;
 But ſhe at laſt was forced to ſay,
 As by the months went fitting
 And nothing came, "Great kindneſs this, —
 'Tis truly *unremitting*."

NO. XIX.

Luck varies with the men who hunt
 For gold, as I'll explain :
 Some find the ore *in creafes*,
 While others ſeek *in vein*.

NO. XX.

Knoweſt thou, whene'er the joyleſs mind
 Seems moſt diſtraught with grief,
 Where ſympathy the heart can find,
 And genuine relief ?
 If not, then Reader, learn from me,
 Howe'er the caſes vary,
 You'll find *Relief* and *Sympathy*
 In every Dictionary.

NO. XXI.

Once, at a feast, when jokes flew 'round
Much thicker than the flies,
The host had doubts if he should carve
The mutton *saddlewise*,
And therefore turned to Theodore Hook,
The celebrated Wit,
Who answered, "*Bridlewife*, for in
My mouth will be a *bit*."

NO. XXII.

Forth from the Opera I saw a wag,
Well known to Fame in all his glory come,
And as he stepped upon the icy flag
He fell with force enough to strike him dumb,
And rolling over, landed in the gutter ;
I sprang to save, — but only caught his hat, —
And as he rose I thought I heard him mutter,
"One must *C sharp* if he would not *B flat*."

NO. XXIII.

QUESTION.

Fair Joan of Arc, they say, was not
Sword, lance or pike afraid of ;
Can any person tell me what
So brave a girl was made of ?

ANSWER.

The Heroine, whose triumphant blade
 Made Bedford's foldiers dance,
 If History tells the truth, was Maid
 Of Orleans, in France.





SONNETS.



LIKE an indulgent mother, Nature still
Awaits her prodigal's return ; — nor blame
Nor scorn has she, but ever smiles the same
And yields her bounties to each one who will ;
Her generous arms she opes to him who worn
With toil and sorrow, hopeless and forlorn,
Jaded and fainting with the unceasing strife
And battle with the world, would seek for rest, —
Enfolds him like an infant to her breast
And reads him lessons of a purer life.
Here, with this streamlet rippling at my feet,
Far from the roar and turmoil of the town,
I feel the rapture of her presence sweet,
Nor would resign it for an Emperor's crown.



As some poor captive, prisoned and enchained,
Who long in vain has struggled to be free,
Will learn to deem his lot by Heaven ordained
And yield to what he thought a stern decree,
So I, rebellious once, now can but bless
The fate that makes me so entirely thine,
To love and serve thee is my happiness ; —
Who would be free where bondage is divine !
In joy and grief, in pleasure and in pain,
Nearest and dearest to thy heart I've stood ;
'Tis mockery to say, " Be free once more,"
My arm is powerless to ope the door
Would lead me forth ; — so long I've worn thy chain
I could not break it, Dearest, if I would.



WITHOUT, the tempest rages, and the winds
Howl like unearthly spirits through the street,
My casements shake in concert with the blinds,
And all the panes are crufted o'er with fleet ;
But here within is comfort and repose,
The cheerful logs are blazing on my hearth, —
Of favorite books in rows fucceeding rows,
That ftand at my command, there is no dearth ;
Thefe are the valued friends with whom I live, —
Friends who affume no privilege to fay
Unwelcome truths, or mark my faults, or give
Unasked advice, — right pleafant friends are they.
With them, — this pipe, — that flafk of Rhenif
wine, —
Though tempefts rage, — beatitude is mine.



I PINE and languish with desire to know
Something of this unquiet heart of mine,
The mystery of its life, and where shall flow
In future time this essence so divine, —
Soul, Spirit, Mind, Intelligence, or Love,
Or whatfoe'er, — that raises me above
The brutes that wholly die ; and whence arose
The spark that lighted in my heart this fire.
As Life is hastening on, more fiercely glows
Within me this unsatisfied desire
Heaven's book of knowledge in my hands to grasp
And all the bonds of Ignorance unclasp ;
But I must wait God's time, — then each shall
 know
Whence his life came and whither it shall go.



IN genial sunshine and in stormy weather
O'er pleasant slopes and through some rugged ways,
E'en from the earliest of our boyhood's days,
We two have walked Life's varied path together,
And shall we now, in spite of what hath been
Through all these years, ignore the well-knit band
Of fellowship? Aloof shall we two stand
While wider grows the gulf that yawns between,
Until its hollow jaws shall open so wide
That all endeavor will be vain to cross, —
While we regret, too late, each other's loss, —
And all for cherishing a foolish pride?
No. Not if one atoning word of mine
Sent from my heart hath power to meet with thine.



As some light bark upon a summer sea
Holding its homeward course, with hope elate
And joy triumphant, speeding gallantly,
Unconscious of its sad impending fate,
Is suddenly by Jove's dread lightning riven,
Then, wrecked and shattered, by the tempest driven ;
So my confiding heart, that day by day
Seemed hastening to the haven of its rest
Where Care and Sorrow ne'er should find their way,
But Love and Happiness would build their nest,
Was stricken by a fatal blow, and hurled
Again upon a cold and heartless world ;
Hope, as she fled me, whispered all was lost,
And now my heart is wrecked and tempest-tost.



THERE is an Art no penalties engird,
Of power transcendent, — ever in our reach, —
And our own hearts its daily need can teach ;
No laws restrict its use, — to all 'tis free
As Heaven's great gift of air ; the vulgar herd
Have equal rights with Kings ; and yet 'tis strange,
Knowing its limitless extent of range,
So few employ its magic ministry.
Its sway o'er young and old no voice can speak, —
It hath a charm to change the wayward mood
Of friends and lovers, — to sustain the weak, —
To tame the brutal, — to restrain the rude, —
To win the wandering, and to soothe distress.
'Tis Love's own graceful Art of Gentleness.



THE knell is tolled of all my joyous dreams
Of tranquil happiness, my Love, with thee.
And all the Future, once so brilliant, teems
With nought but loneliness and misery ;
For Hope lies buried, — funeral tapers burn
Where Hymen's torch should throw its gladdening
beams.

Dark shadows greet me wherefoe'er I turn,
And seem to mock me with a fiendish glee, —
No resignation can my spirit learn, —
No consolation can Time bring to me ; —
A barren spot whereon no sunshine gleams, —
A wreck abandoned on a stormy sea, —
A withered garland on sepulchral urn, —
Are what my heart is like, apart from thee.



ADVICE is wafted both by Sage and Preacher
Because Experience ever keeps the school
Wherein all learn, — the wise man and the fool ;
Whate'er men say, she is the only teacher,
Her tasks are hard, — her lessons, slowly learned,
Are ne'er forgotten ; deeply are they burned
Into the very soul. Ah, yes ! and when
In later years our self-conceit departs,
And, if at all, true wisdom comes to men,
A consciousness of folly fills our hearts ;
The mists that shroud our vision break away
And then to our regret we clearly see
What vain illusions lured our steps astray ; —
How false the Gods to which we bent the knee.



Is there no balm in Gilead for the mood
Wherein I sit in misery, and feel
Anew the agony Time will not heal?
In hopelessness, despair, and grief I brood,
My heart consuming in this solitude,
Groping in darkness, — seeking but in vain
For comfort to this mourning soul of mine;
Hath Friendship's gentle craft no anodyne
To soothe the trouble of an o'erwrought brain?
Alas! No ministry of human art, —
Whate'er its mission in this world of pain, —
Can cure the desolation of the heart;
But Faith, that bids us never to despond,
Can rend the gloom and show the Heaven beyond.



IN this delicious silence so profound
Of Night's most halcyon hour, as I lie
Stretched on the turf beneath a gorgeous sky
While all the world is hushed, am I not crowned
With Heaven's divinest gift, — a joyous heart ?
All passions cease, — no evil thought can mar
The glory shed on me by moon and star, —
The world's vexations one by one depart,
The wounds of daily suffering are healed, —
Long-cherished hatreds, and all sense of wrong
Held in my inmost soul I freely yield ; —
For perfect Love, e'en such as Poet's song
Hath never told, so fills this heart of mine,
I know the Presence near me is Divine.



BEFORE my voice is silent with the dead,
Would I might breathe one grand and noble lay
That, — sung beside the dying sufferer's bed, —
Would soothe the fainting soul and aching head, —
Teach my sad brethren on their onward way
To struggle manfully from day to day, —
Inspire a firmer trustfulness, — relieve
The bitter agony of those who grieve, —
Rouse the despairing, — and make cold hearts beat
With a sublime emotion. I would give
All of this life in human hearts to live.
Grant me to sing that song divinely sweet,
Then 'neath the daisies joyfully I'll lie
For I shall know I cannot wholly die.

